



The Florida House of Representatives

Chris Sprowls
Speaker

NEWS RELEASE

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Legislation to Transform System for Job Seekers Passes First House Committee

TALLAHASSEE, Fla. (*March 4, 2021*) — In the opening week of Legislative Session Florida House Speaker Chris Sprowls, R-Palm Harbor, today celebrated the unanimous passage of two key bills from the House Secondary & Career Development Subcommittee that would disrupt, transform and integrate Florida's workforce and education systems to better serve the job seekers, students and workers of today and tomorrow.

"Hundreds of millions of dollars have flowed into Florida's broken workforce and education systems for years that are prescribed by the Federal government and too often only measures inputs -- not results," said Speaker Sprowls. "We must do better. Today, the bright vision for an Opportunity Hub for Floridians received overwhelming support in committee. I look forward to seeing these bills make it to the Floor, and eventually, the Governor's desk, so that we can be the first state in America to insist our workforce programs meet actual outcomes standards -- so that all Floridians can access programs through one unified system and find meaningful employment and economic freedom."

HB 1507, "Reimaging Education and Career Help (REACH) Act," sponsored by Representative Clay Yarborough, R-Jacksonville, lays the foundation for a workforce and education system framework overhaul that will integrate the pieces, establish accountability and break down barriers to employment and economic mobility for the students, workers and job seekers of today and tomorrow. Among other things, the legislation calls for:

Integration

- A new REACH Office in the Office of the Governor to coordinate the myriad access points to education and career help
- Consistent data collection across workforce boards, centers, education divisions and providers
- A no-wrong-door-entry strategy with one common intake form and case management system

Accountability

- Higher standards for providers that want to remain on the Eligible Training Provider List
- Term limits for appointed local workforce board members
- Public posting of compensation of all executives and key employees on local workforce boards
- Uniform performance expectations and letter grades for each local workforce boards

Results

- A waiver request to bypass inflexible federal rules on workforce funding and structure
- Clear information about in-demand jobs, skills needed and pathways to success
- Local workforce boards to be measured by what matters – meaningful outcomes for the diverse communities they serve
- Rewards (funding) only going to workforce partners that can show results

“Bloated bureaucracy, unaccountable workforce development boards, siloed agencies. All hamstrung by the federal government’s lack of accountability requirements. None of this serves Floridians or their families,” said Representative Yarborough, HB 1507 sponsor. “I stand with Speaker Sprowls in calling for change, and I am proud to introduce the REACH Act to fix these problems so that our workforce system works for Floridians.”

House Bill 1505, sponsored by Representative Lauren Melo, R-Naples, outlines a consumer-centered workforce delivery system to meet Florida’s students, workers, and job seekers where they are – from middle, high school and college campuses to those looking to get back into the workforce after a lapse in employment.

The legislation includes a measure that requires CareerSource Florida and the Departments of Economic Opportunity (DEO), Education (DOE), and Children & Families (DCF) to create a single Workforce Information System so that consumers can access services from multiple agencies through one site and register for workforce training and pre-qualify for benefits at one location. HB 1505 also includes requirements that:

- DOE report data on the earnings of participants in its apprenticeship and pre-apprenticeship programs to track effectiveness.
- Paid out-of-classroom work-based learning opportunities for students are prioritized over non-paid.
- A new credential program be created to help post-secondary students attain skills badges that demonstrate employability as they complete certain general education courses.

“Thank you Chair Stan McClain and the members of the House Secondary & Career Development Subcommittee for supporting Florida’s workforce today by passing HB 1505,” said Representative Melo. “With this bill, we will transform our workforce system from one that is fragmented and inefficient into one that puts opportunities for sustainable, long-term employment first. Floridian’s shouldn’t have to work so hard to get to work.”

The bills can be viewed here:

- [HB 1507](#)
- [HB 1505](#)

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